

# PATRIOT

439TH AIRLIFT WING

AIR FORCE RESERVE

WESTOVER ARB

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## Westover spared realignment and closure list

By Maj. Rick Dyer

The Department of Defense's March 12 announcement of bases recommended for closure left Westover officials breathing a bit easier--for now.

Westover did not appear on the list of military facilities which Defense Secretary Les Aspin proposed to the independent Base Realignment and Closure Commission.

"We were fairly confident that we wouldn't be on it," said Col. James P. Czekanski, 439th Airlift Wing commander. Westover has a good record and we're cost-effective."

He believes that the base's success as a major C-5 staging facility during Desert Storm, and the wing's performance during the recent Operational Readiness Inspection, helped to convince the Pentagon that Westover should remain open.

Czekanski cautioned, however, that the current selection process is not over, and that another round of base closings is slated for 1995.

Under the DOD proposal, which is now under consideration by the BRAC commission, four major air force bases would be closed to reduce the defense budget. Three other active duty facilities would be turned over to the reserve.

Targeted for closure are K.I. Sawyer AFB, Mich., Homestead AFB, Fla., Newark AFB, Ohio and O'Hare Air Reserve Station, Ill.

Under DOD realignment proposals, March AFB, Calif., McGuire AFB, N.J. and Griffiss AFB, N.Y. would become reserve facilities.

Locally, the Navy Submarine Base at New London, Conn. would lose its fleet of nuclear-powered submarines, but remain open as a training school.

During April and May, the closure commission will hold public hearings on the DOD proposals. The commission will have until July 1 to send a final list to President Clinton.

The President will then have 15 days to approve or disapprove the commission's recommendations. If approved, the list is sent to Congress. If disapproved, the list is returned to the commission with comments.

The commission will have until August 15 to submit a new list for presidential approval. President Clinton must approve the revised list by September 1. If he disapproves the list, or fails to act on it, no base closures will occur during this round.

Unless rejected by both the Senate and House of Representatives, the base closure list becomes law 45 days after the President forwards it to Congress.

Congress cannot add or delete individual installations, it must adopt or reject the entire list.

Defense Secretary Aspin cited the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the cold war as major factors which man-

date a smaller and less expensive military.

"We are downsizing in the same way that many major corporations are," Aspin told the media in March. "Just as they are eliminating overhead and closing unneeded plants, so we are inactivating forces, eliminating overhead and closing unneeded military bases worldwide."

Czekanski is hopeful that Westover will not be added to the current list as it travels from the commission to the White House and Capitol Hill. However, he said that it is much harder to predict what will happen when the next round of closings is considered in two years.

"I believe that there will be greater competition (to remain open) among Air Force Reserve facilities in 1995," the wing commander predicted. Defense budgets will continue to spiral down, and every base is going to be scrutinized ex-

*(continued on page 8)*

### ***Air Force closures***

**Homestead Air Force Base, Fla.  
K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base, Mich.  
Newark Air Force Base, Ohio  
O'Hare International Airport  
Air Force Reserve Station, Chicago**

### ***Air Force realignments***

**Griffiss Air Force Base, N.Y.  
March Air Force Base, Calif.  
McGuire Air Force Base, N.J.**

*(For more BRAC information, see page 8.)*



# Petitto will direct tankers from Mogadishu

By MSgt. Tom Allocco

Maj. Wayne Petitto, 439th Airlift Control Flight operations officer, says that fighting boredom during off-duty hours is among the toughest hardships for troops in Somalia.

Petitto arrived in Mogadishu, the capital of the beleaguered country, to begin a 30-day tour in March. During the period he will serve with tanker airlift control elements from Rhein-Main AB and Charleston AFB at the Mogadishu airport.

A Desert Shield/Storm veteran of airlift operations at King Khalid Military City, Petitto said Mogadishu reminds him of the spartan conditions ALCF members endured at the Saudi Arabian desert airfield.

There had been a peaceful protest by Somalis, but the biggest excitement for the American troops was preparation for a St. Patrick's Day talent show competition. Petitto was pinning his hopes on polishing up some tunes on the same beat-up guitar he carried around Saudi Arabia.

"I've selected a couple of pieces to really clean up. Other than that, there is even less to do here than there was at King Khalid," he said.

He said the Americans in Somalia stayed on top of the news about the East Coast's "Blizzard of '93. At the same time, the troops in Somalia were sunbathing on a stretch of Indian Ocean coast which has been dubbed "CNN Beach."

The beach gained worldwide fame when a landing team of Marines and Navy Seals in combat gear came ashore under the glare of news camera crews in Bermuda shorts.

The beach isn't likely to attract paying tourists.

"The polluted water, sharp coral and sharks are a bit of a health hazard in many ways, so those of us with sense won't go beyond sunbathing on the sand," Petitto said.

Petitto's job is to coordinate missions of aircraft coming in and out of the country. One of the best parts of the job, he said, is working with Australian and New Zealand airlift crews.

Security is good for the Americans in Mogadishu and the Allied airlift effort is beginning to make things better for the Somalis, he said.

"The Army has a good grip on the local situation...The city is in bad shape, but thriving compared to what it was.

"Hopefully, after a short period of peace these people will resist letting things get the way they were," he said.

## Disease a major foe of Restore Hope troops in Somalia

By SSgt. Kimberly Saganski

Gun-toting technicals aren't the only enemies U.S. troops are battling in Somalia.

Personnel serving in Operation Restore Hope there must also contend with maladies spread by a horrifying assortment of disease-carrying mosquitoes, flies, snails and vermin. They pose a health threat that could bring any army to its knees.

According to the Jan. 17 edition of the Miami Herald, U. S. health officials have developed an intensive plan of action to combat the unsanitary conditions and health risks.

Before deployment, troops are extensively briefed about the numerous health risks they would encounter which include such deadly snakes as Black Mambas, Carpet Vipers and Puff Adders.

Every building, floorboard and piece of equipment is washed down with calcium hypochloride, more easily recognized as strong swimming pool chlorine.

Basic infection control practices, such as protecting food and water sources are imperative to keep our men and women disease-free.

"The doctors established rigorous procedures for hand washing, and we never drank the water in Somalia," said Col. James P. Gallin, 439th AW vice commander, who served for 30 days in Mogadishu early this year.

Gallin, who helped direct the relief airlift of military troops and supplies into the ravaged African country, took malaria pills throughout his tour in Somalia.

Along with taking the anti-malaria medication on a daily basis, Restore Hope troops also religiously use their insect repellents and spray pesticides. By

doing so, they hope to ward off ailments such as myiasis--boils caused by parasites which burrow under a victim's skin.

The major health complaint heard by troops in Somalia has been heat rash, which has coincidentally been identified as a side-effect to malaria pills.

According to U.S. health officials, the adoption of a "prevention is far better than cure" attitude is the backbone of an education program that sets the ground rules for survival in the war-torn African country.

It seems that the education and housekeeping routines are working.

Less than one percent of U.S. military personnel are coming down with bacterial diarrhea, as compared to over a 10 percent incidence rate for the same complaint in Saudi Arabia.

# PATRIOT

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# 439th crews continue to fly relief supplies from Egypt to Somalia

By TSgt. Sandi Michon

To the starving Somali people, Westover aircrews are like the proverbial cavalry galloping to the rescue in the nick of time.

Westover aircrews have joined the continuing relief airlift which ferries supplies from Cairo, Egypt into Mogadishu, Somalia.

According to Col. Ron Peacock, commander of operations, two Westover crews were sent to the stage at Cairo West in late March, with another crew joining them in April.

"It always feels good to help people," said Capt. Bill Rolocut, 337th AS aircraft commander, in a telephone interview from Cairo West. After three missions into Mogadishu and Mombasa, Kenya, he was pragmatic about the humanitarian flights. "For us, it's a normal job," he said, referring to a growing list of missions, such as Armenia, St. Croix, Homestead AFB, and others.

Rolocut and his crew have been busy flying, but other crews have been inactive due to illness. Capt. Leon St. Laurent, 337th AS pilot, was sick with an upper respiratory infection for four days, putting his crew in a non-flying status. According to Rolocut, a C-141 pilot was diagnosed with malaria while participating in the stage.

The Cairo staging facility serves as a coordination point for C-5, C-141 and C-130 flights to and from Mogadishu, and to and from stateside. There are three "lines", or C-5 aircrew slots, and an aircrew generally mans a line for about 14 days, before being replaced by a relief crew. Westover shares one line with a Kelly AFB reserve crew, and mans one line completely. The third line is staffed by active duty.

"Originally, the active duty was handling the Somali airlift, but the reserve is taking more over to allow the active duty to assume other responsibilities," explained Col. James Gallin, 439th vice commander. Gallin headed the Mogadishu stage for 30 days between December and January.

The stage aircrews consist of a minimum of three pilots, two flight engineers and three loadmasters. The aircrews generally



Courtesy of Capt. Gary Cooke

**AFRICAN HOLIDAY --** Crew members Capt. Gary Cooke, TSgt. Steven Ross, and SSgt. Vincent Zito, (left to right) don stocking caps during Christmas visit to Somalia.

generate their 5,500-mile flight to Cairo out of Dover AFB, Del.

According to Current Operations Assistant Linda Colucci, the flight to Cairo may be direct or indirect depending on cargo and/or refueling stops.

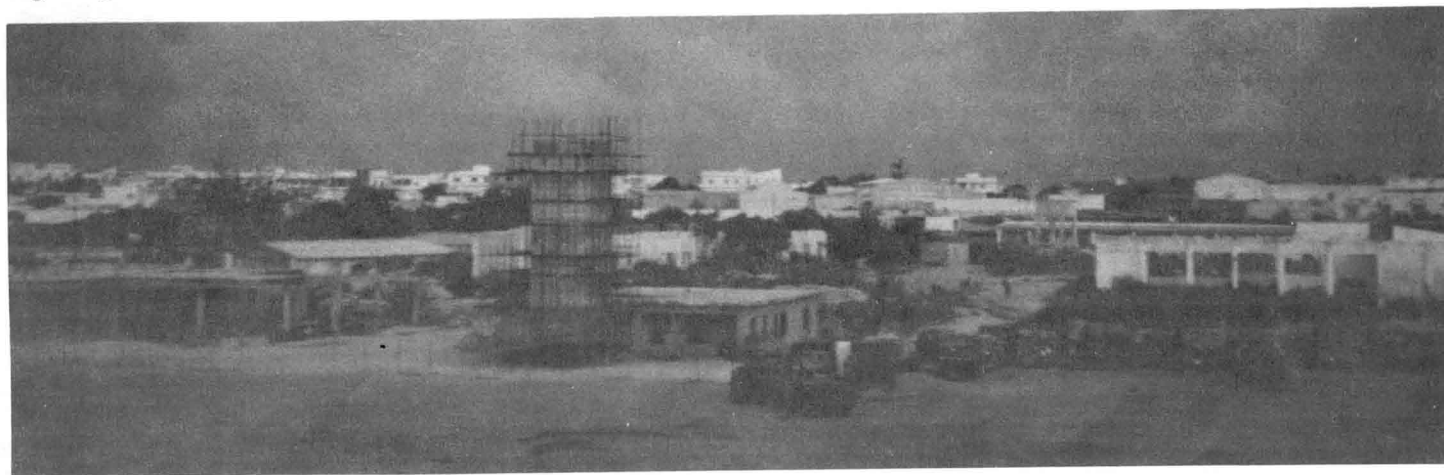
Once in Cairo, the crews begin a mandatory rest period before the second leg to Mogadishu which is 2,143 miles, or five hours of flying.

"It was evening each time we flew into Mogadishu, so we couldn't see much of the area," said Rolocut. He said that only two C-5's can be at Mogadishu airport at once, so their turnaround time is usually around three hours and fifteen minutes. The Galaxy refuels at Djibouti while enroute back to Cairo.

Most of the airlift out of Cairo West ferries supplies and personnel rotations and equipment.

"Most of the donations are managed through non-government organizations. The Air Force provides some of the airlift, but mostly provides security," explained Gallin. He said that other countries are minimally involved in the Somali relief effort, and we actually have provided airlift for other countries to Somalia.

According to Gallin, Cairo West is an old Soviet fighter base which is now run by the Egyptian Air Force. "It is out in the middle of nowhere, and flight operations are conducted from tents," he said.



Courtesy of Capt. Gary Cooke

**MOGADISHU VISTA --** Clouds gather over the capital of Somalia.



# AFRES Senior Enlisted Advisor visits Westover

Article and photo  
by SSgt. Christine Mora

Expanded Space-A travel and commissary privileges are just two improvements on CMSgt. James A. Rossi's agenda.

The AFRES senior enlisted advisor visited Westover during the April UTA to talk with reservists and absorb their input.

"I spend most of my time on the road visiting AFRES units around the country and I try to let reservists know that I value their opinion," the chief explained. He cites many similar concerns among troops throughout the reserve.

"Reorganization seems to be causing havoc around the whole Air Force," he said. "Many airmen feel that manning changes and base closures may threaten their career."

Rossi explained that he tries to keep people informed to help them understand and "not feel like they're in vacuum with no control."

"We need to accept change that we can't control--like size and manning, and work on issues that we can control--like management and organization," said the chief.

Another issue of high concern is the reserve promotion system. "Many reservists do an excellent job, yet are locked into a slot and unable to be promoted," he said. "When a less proficient airmen is given a PEP promotion or unit vacancy promotion because of politics or lack of management, it is very frustrating and leads to a negative attitude and sense of apathy."

The chief suggests the solution may lie in revamping the PEP program and improving Professional Development courses. "We need to train high-level managers in our new way of managing," he said. "We're training our airmen and sergeants in quality management and they get disheartened when their superiors don't follow suit."

He hopes to accomplish this added training through structured seminars and study groups.

"Good management often gets put on the back burner in order to put out fires," he said. "Managers need to make quality management a high priority. Like Maj. Gen. John J. Closner said, it is really easy to fall off the quality wagon, but success lies in how fast you get back on."

With military budget cuts and tighten-

ing belts looming in the horizon, Rossi believes the Air Force Reserve is in good shape. "As the active duty downsizes, the military relies more on the Reserve--particularly in the Air Force," he said. "The Air Force Reserve proved in Desert Shield/Storm, that we are a valuable asset to the success of operations, especially in terms of strategic airlift."

The chief foresees expanded operational roles and more reserve bases are in store for the Air Force and feels that the Air Force Reserve has proven itself to be a cheaper and more efficient alternative to the active duty mission.

"The Department of Defense is looking at volunteerism and weaving the Reserve into their contingency plan," Rossi said.

"It is important for reservists to maintain balance at home and with their employers, so they may remain a valuable asset."

Adjusting to change is never easy, and Air Force personnel are adapting to a great deal lately, the chief said. Uniform changes are sparking great controversy among the troops.

"Adjustments in the Battle Dress Uniform are still being made," he said. "The changes were made--replacing patches, nametapes and stripes with leather patches--to be cost-saving for individual airmen." Rank recognition proved to be a problem and rank insignia

will now be worn in addition to the leather patch.

New blues are another hot item, according to the chief. "The new service dress uniform was designed to streamline the Air Force and give us a distinctive look," Rossi said.

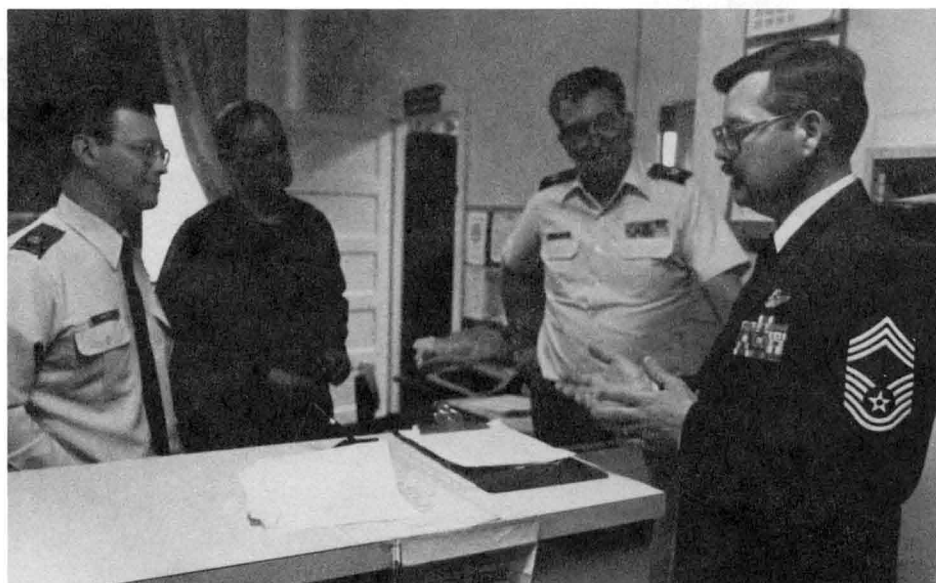
He modeled the new uniform to Westover personnel and has nothing but praise for the new duds. "The material is a combination blend that is much more comfortable than previous versions. There is also less clutter on the jacket which in turn means less cost for the individual."

The new service dress uniform features a more businesslike jacket, no name tags, no U.S. brass, and altered rank insignia. The uniforms are gradually being phased in and will be mandatory by 1999.

Cutting costs in the area of benefits should not be an issue to reservists according to the chief.

"I'm working hard to expand Space-A benefits for spouses of gray-area reservists," Rossi explained. "It wouldn't cost anything to add this extra benefit to retirees." He added that expanded commissary privileges to eliminate the need for commissary cards is another improvement he hopes for.

The chief greeted Westover reservists at the Enlisted Dining Out and hopes to keep up the lines of communication he finds crucial to a productive force.



**S.E.A. DUTY --** CMSgt. James A. Rossi, right, senior enlisted advisor for the Air Force Reserve, exchanges viewpoints with members of the 58th Aerial Port Squadron. Chief Rossi spent the April UTA at Westover talking and listening to 439th enlisted members. Also shown from left are: Maj. Glenn Martin, TSgt. Donald G. Bascomb and SMSgt. John J. Spiedel.



# Medal of Honor winner addresses enlisted Dining Out

By MSgt. Tom Allocco

John Levitow has traveled many miles since earning the Medal of Honor, but he still has the same plain speaking demeanor of the young loadmaster he was in Vietnam.

The man whose raw courage saved the lives of his fellow AC-47 aircrew members lets it be known that he has reached a point in life where he doesn't worry much about conventional opinions.

Levitow drove here from his South Windsor, Conn. home to address guests at Westover's Dining Out at the Consolidated Open Mess on April 3.

According to MSgt. Kelly Payne, vice president of the Dining Out committee, the affair was a huge success and another will be planned for 1995.

"We had 212 people in attendance and just about everyone seemed to enjoy themselves," she said. "The committee has decided to have the affair biennially rather than every year because of the amount of work involved in setting it up."

While staying at a Flyers Inn VIP suite, Levitow greeted visitors who had come to see a genuine hero. The Air Force's most famous enlisted member delighted in shocking his guests by referring more than once to himself as "an idiot" for the series of cool actions under fire that saved eight lives.

It's his way of putting into perspective the pressures that come from life in the spotlight.

For example, Levitow has been an invited guest at every presidential inauguration and talked to every president since 1970.

"The medal has opened up a lot of doors and makes you very visible. But sometimes it makes you inhibited. You're not able to do what you want to do," he said.

The ribbon with the white stars on a blue field puts him in the front ranks of the nation's most honored warriors, but Levitow refuses to put himself on a pedestal.

The day he received his Medal of Honor from President Nixon at the White House, he says "I didn't feel anything. I was numb."

"You read about Sergeant York and Audie Murphy, but you don't automatically put yourself in that group," he said.

He prefers to see himself standing with all his fellow enlisted military members who do their job every day without



SrA. Mike Lyman

**MEDIA ATTENTION--**John Levitow, the only Air Force enlisted person to receive the Medal of Honor, is interviewed by Tina Lak, a reporter for the Springfield Union-News prior to addressing Westover's Dining Out during the April UTA.

special recognition.

His Medal of Honor, he said, is "a symbol of all those people not recognized...I said it on the record many, many times. It's not my medal. It represents the enlisted men of Vietnam."

Levitow drives a car with a Connecticut Medal of Honor plate and the single number 5. That number represents the four enlisted men who earned the Medal of Honor in the Army Air Corps in World War II. He is number five, the only enlisted man to earn the top honor since the Air Force was founded in 1947.

It happened on his 180th mission when a mortar round hit his C-47 Spooky gunship near Long Binh during the night of Feb. 24, 1969. He was bleeding from 40 shrapnel wounds and the plane was bouncing like a roller coaster, but he pulled a wounded man away from an open door.

"We were pumped up on adrenalin. We were picking up 140 pound ammo cans and stuffing them next to the guns to hold them," he said.

The loadmaster earned the status of hero by keeping his wits under extreme stress and doing all the right things while bleeding and stunned.

"Air Force training, that's why I'm here. That's a free promo. I'm not being paid for that," he said.

Levitow spotted an armed, smoking Mark 24 magnesium flare rolling around the cargo hold. Knowing that at the most

he had 20 seconds to get rid of it, he tried vainly to pick it up as the plane banked. Finally, he threw himself on it and tossed it out the door.

"From the moment I headed for the flare, I don't remember a thing. They tell me it exploded the second it got out of the door," he said.

He served 20 more Vietnam missions, including bringing home bodies.

"There are some memories I want to forget. I remember bringing back in a coffin an individual I knew. I had to sign for his remains," he said.

"I went and picked up 105 coffins to take to the U.S. in a C-141. I had to sign for each one."

Today, the VA rates Levitow 60 percent disabled. The more than 30 pieces of shrapnel he carries in his body have set off metal detectors at Chicago's O'Hare Airport.

Another scar he carries is the recollection that someone who resented his Vietnam service smashed the windows and scrawled insults on his car when he was on a Connecticut college campus in the early 1970s.

The wound was healed when he marched in New York City's Desert Storm ticker tape parade.

"When the Vietnam vets walked by the crowd cheered and cheered," he said.

For Vietnam vet John Levitow, that walk in the ranks with his fellow veterans was the best of all honors.





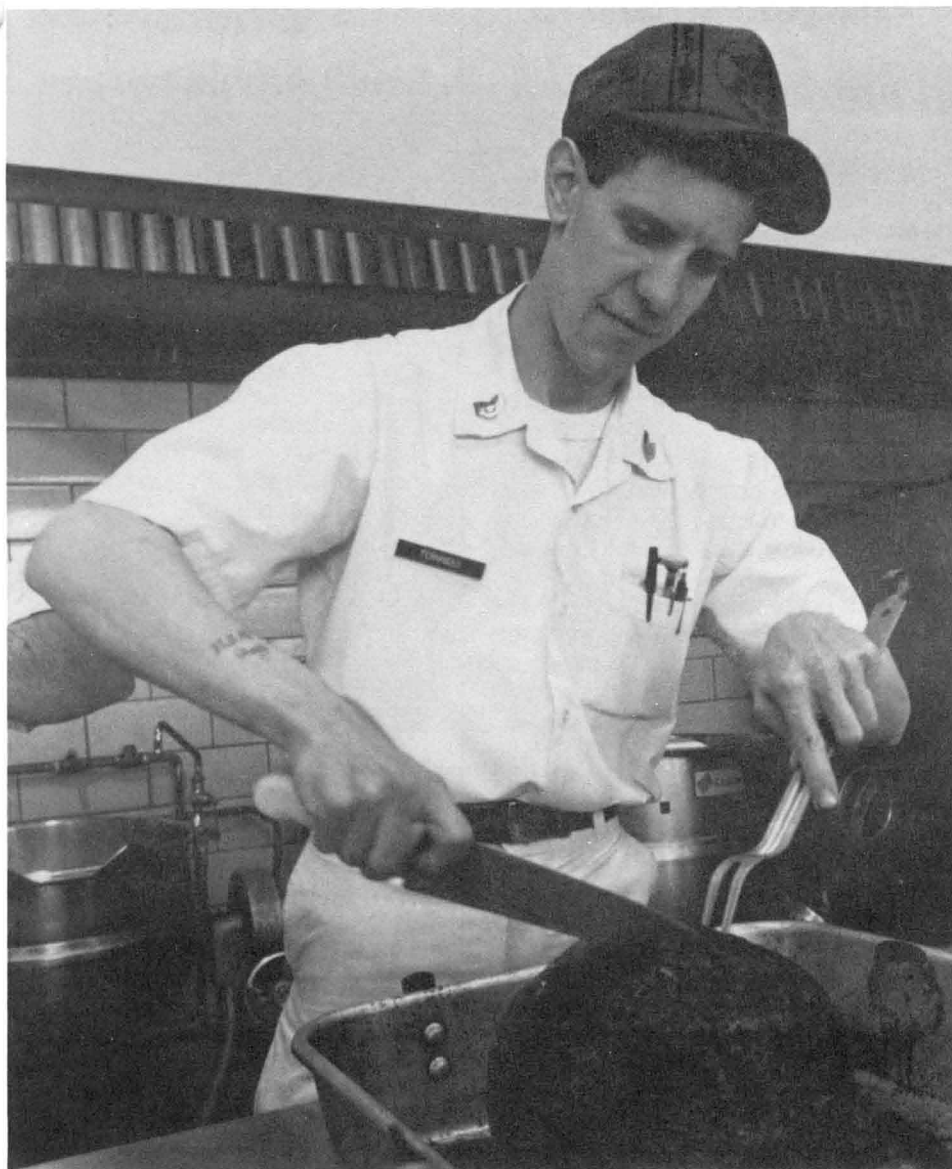
## ***Civic leaders get first hand look at 439th AW***

### **VISITORS WELCOME**

Some 200 fire chiefs from around Massachusetts attended a meeting here on March 17, and more than 70 took an orientation flight aboard a 439th AW C-5. They are shown boarding the aircraft in top photo. Below, Col. James P. Czekanski, commander of the 439th (center) is pictured with a group of Massachusetts Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve committee members, aboard the aircraft carrier USS Ranger in San Diego. At Col. Czekanski's right is retired Navy Captain and Medal of Honor winner, George Street III of Andover, Mass. The ESGR group flew to California aboard a Westover C-5 to observe military operations in and around San Diego in late March. Each year more than 3,000 area residents visit Westover and view 439th aircraft. After curtailing tours during winter in the interest of safety, the season is now back in full swing.







**SSgt. Joe Fernandes**

## Unsung hero

# Dining hall's "first" cook

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** A new feature begins this month in the *PATRIOT* spotlighting Westover workers who go the extra mile. We applaud these unsung heroes for their quiet diligence and fine example to us all.

Article and photo by SrA. Mike Lyman

Joe Fernandes adds a secret ingredient to every dish--his own brand of enthusiasm.

Cooking for hundreds is tough work, which is why Fernandes is so popular at the dining hall. Among the 439th

MWRSS dining hall workers, he is known as first class chef who also knows how to get everyone to work together.

With a compliment or a one-liner, or just by pitching in to help, Fernandes helps get a tough job done. That means a lot when your job involves arriving at work at 4 a.m. to cook.

The men and women of the dining hall may not have the most glamorous job on base, but when the coffee's not hot in the morning, everybody knows about it. Fernandes is one of those unsung heroes who keeps the coffee flowing and helps prepare good, hot meals for hundreds every day.

"Joe's a very dedicated individual who's well liked and respected," said SSgt. Tony Perras, cook. "His ability to communicate is his strongest asset--and he doesn't mind using it to help others."

As one of the dining hall's food production managers, Fernandes supervises a shift of seven who draw, cook and prepare the food. As "first" chef, he also does a lot of cooking, including some of his favorite recipes, namely, pasta, chili and chicken chow mein.

"The most challenging part of this job is trying to decide how much food to prepare," he said. "Because we have a daily head count that fluctuates dramatically from meal to meal, we're preparing food throughout the meal."

"Mealtimes can get pretty stressful," said Fernandes. "Sometimes all it takes to ease the tension is a little humor. To get the job done we all work together. In fact, to survive in this business you have to be a team player."

"Things can get just as stressful when we're in the field," he said. "We work very long hours and we have to be especially safety conscious, particularly with the immersion heaters."

The 31-year-old Fernandes began his cooking career when he joined the Air Force in 1982, serving five years of active duty at Griffiss AFB, N.Y.

After leaving active service, Fernandes joined the reserve and has been working in Westover's dining hall ever since.

Fernandes continues to hone his cooking skills as a civilian, where he works as a food service supervisor for the Department of Veterans Affairs in Newington, Conn.

A resident of Southington Conn., he lives with his wife Patricia, and their two sons, Joseph Jr., 7, and Andrew, 3. His hobbies include fly fishing, hunting, and golf.

Whether he's preparing breakfast in the dining hall or B rations in the field, Fernandes' experience is paying off well for Westover diners.

"He can do wonders with the minimum amount of supplies," said TSgt. Charlie Walker, equipment custodian for 439th MWRSS. "He can turn a potentially plain meal into a feast."



# Closings will affect Reserve units

## List changes still possible

**ROBINS AFB, GA.**-- Air Force Reserve units in six states may feel the impact if the military's recommended base closings and realignments are adopted.

Defense secretary Les Aspin submitted his recommendations to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission on March 12. If approved, AFRES will assume responsibility for McGuire AFB, N.J., and March AFB, Calif., and move Reserve units.

Installations targeted for closure or realignment action which affect AFRES units are Bergstrom and Carswell AFBs, Texas; Homestead and MacDill AFBs, Fla.; Travis AFB, Calif.; Mather, McClellan and Beale AFBs, Calif.; Willow Grove ARS, PA.; and O'Hare IAP ARS, Ill.

Proposed actions by base are: Bergstrom and Carswell AFBs -- The Air Force recommends closing the Reserve cantonment area on Bergstrom AFB. The 704th Fighter Squadron and the 924th Fighter Group support units will move to Carswell AFB.

Homestead and MacDill AFBs -- DOD recommends closing Homestead AFB. The 301st Rescue Squadron will move to Patrick AFB, Fla., and the 482nd Fighter Wing will transfer to MacDill AFB and convert from F-16s to KC-135R tankers.

March and Travis AFBs -- March is programmed to become an air reserve base in 1996. The 445th Airlift Wing will transfer there from Norton AFB, Calif., under a separate action and the 452nd Air Refueling Wing will remain. The 452nd ARW's 79th Air Refueling Squadron, a KC-10A Extender associate unit, will move to Travis AFB.

Mather, McClellan and Beale AFBs -- The Air Force recommends redirecting the movement of the 940th Air Refueling Group from Mather AFB, as outlined in the 1991 BRAC.

The service wants the unit and its KC-135 aircraft to go temporarily to McClellan AFB and then permanently to Beale AFB. McGuire AFB and Willow Grove ARS -- The 514th Airlift Wing (Associate) will receive 14 C-141 Starlifters when the host active-duty wing inactivates and transfers its aircraft. The base will become an air reserve base by late 1996.

The Air Force will consider joint civil aviation uses for the airfield. Units would remain as tenants if McGuire becomes a civil airfield. The 913th Airlift Group, a C-130 Hercules unit at Willow Grove ARS, will move to McGuire AFB.

O'Hare IAP ARS -- DOD recommends closing the air reserve station as proposed by the city of Chicago. The 928th Airlift Group, a C-130 unit, will relocate to the Greater Rockford Airport or another site acceptable to the Air Force. The transfer depends on the city's ability to finance the cost of replacing unit facilities, moving the unit and cleaning up the environment.

AFRES officials are reviewing the list and considering actions to take if it is adopted by Congress this fall. The commission's list can undergo changes before then.

If it is accepted by the president, the list cannot be modified and must be approved or disapproved in total by Congress. Unless rejected by both houses of Congress, it becomes law 45 days after leaving the president's desk. (AFRESNS)

## Westover remains valuable resource

*(Continued from page 1)*

tensively."

Czekanski added that only the most cost-efficient and environmentally sound facilities are likely to survive the budget-cutting axe.

"We have a tremendous amount of work to do," he said. Westover has to perform its missions flawlessly and retain all the public support which it has generated over the years."

"It's a big job, but so are the stakes," Czekanski added.

## Briefs

### Saudi Arabia honors Desert Storm vets

About 340 Westover members who served overseas during Desert Storm have been awarded the Kuwait Liberation Medal by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Eligible for the medal are those who served in the Area of Operations as an air crew member or with an organization participating in ground or shore military operations during the period of air and ground combat from Jan. 17 to Feb. 28, 1991.

The Kuwait Liberation Medal ribbon, which features the Saudi Arabian military emblem of crossed swords surmounted by a palm tree, is authorized for wear with U.S. and other foreign decorations.

### Blood drive slated

The American Red Cross will conduct a blood drive at the base gym from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, June 4 and 5.

To make a reservation, call Barbara Bender at extension 3193.

### Gym hours changed

New hours have been announced for the base gym. The facility will be open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays and will be closed Sundays. On UTA week ends, the gym will open from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturdays and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sundays.

Films will be discontinued at the base theater because of declining attendance.

### Accounting/Finance cage hours changed

Due to a significant increase in workload, accounting and finance cashier hours are now Monday through Friday, 9-11 a.m., and 1-3 p.m. Saturday UTA hours are 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.. The office will be closed on UTA Sundays.



## Kovaleski's hard work recognized by Disaster Prep



**TSgt. Steve Kovaleski**

Article and photo by SSgt. Christine Mora

When your life depends on doing the job right, it's good to know that TSgt. Steve Kovaleski is on the job. Kovaleski is the man who keeps the chemical gear in order for the 439th Civil Engineering Squadron. It's a job he takes seriously, and the civil engineers are glad of it.

During the April UTA, Kovaleski was named Westover's Outstanding Disaster Preparedness Representative, and with good reason. He's spent years making sure that over 150 members of the Civil Engineering Squadron have everything they need to travel anywhere in the world in any kind of weather. And that's in addition to his regular job.

Kovaleski is an environmental support specialist with the 439th CES, and as an additional duty, acts as the chemical warfare/mobility NCOIC.

The supply section of the Civil Engineering building is filled with towering aisles packed with hundreds of bags of gear that must be ready to go at a moment's notice.

"I try my best to keep the squadron ready for any mobility situation and make sure they have the equipment to deploy anywhere," he said.

The sergeant ensures that each member of the unit is assigned five separate bags including an A-bag (which contains mobility gear), a B-bag (containing cold-weather gear) and three types of C-bags: training, operational and spare; which carry chemical warfare gear.

"Sergeant Kovaleski is on top of his program and is always the first to have his requirements accomplished," said Roberta Knox, disaster preparedness chief.

In addition to the classes, training and responsibilities he must tend to in the CES Utility Shop, he dedicates hours and hours making sure the mobility equipment is up to snuff.

"I'm probably busiest after a deployment--whether it's an inspection, exercise, annual tour or bivouac," he said. Kovaleski

explained that after a field exercise, he double checks each bag and often has to clean and resupply equipment. "After a weekend in muddy Dogpatch, for example, there's not much time for everyone to clean all the equipment."

"Other reservists are very good about helping out," the sergeant modestly said. "I can always find someone if I need help."

"Steve always gives 110 percent," said MSgt. Mike Fyler, his supervisor in the utilities shop. "He takes the whole equipment job on himself and makes sure the mission gets done properly and on time."

Fyler explained that Kovaleski will always help out, no matter what the job. "I don't think he has ever used the word 'no' when asked to perform a task," Fyler added. "There is never a doubt that he will be there to help."

Take an annual tour in Spain a couple of years ago as an example. The engineers worked on a variety of construction projects at Torrejon AB, and Kovaleski was tasked to spend several days working around waste products. "It's really not that bad," he said at the time. "At least it's good weather and we're working in the fresh air," he added with a smile.

Kovaleski began his military career in 1959 with a four-year stint as an air policeman stationed at Aviano Air Base, Italy. He returned there in 1964 to marry his wife, Elisabetta.

He toiled as a toolmaker in Oakville, Conn., and joined the Air Force Reserve as a sheet metal specialist with Westover's 905th Civil Engineering Squadron in 1979.

### PA continues to reap awards

The 439th Airlift Wing Public Affairs office added Department of Defense and Air Force Reserve awards to its growing collection during the past month.

The **PATRIOT** captured the Thomas Jefferson Award for first place in the Funded Newspapers (Small) category sponsored by DoD.

In addition, Maj. Rick Dyer took second place honors for special achievement for **WESTOVER: THE EYE OF THE STORM**, a book he wrote detailing the history of Westover and the 439th during Operation Desert Shield Desert Storm.

Westover was the only Air Force unit to garner more than one award in the worldwide competition. It was also the first time the **PATRIOT** had won in the DoD contest.

At the AFRES level, the PA office was awarded the Public Affairs Director's Excellence Award for a host unit and Gordon A. Newell, chief of PA for the 439th was recognized with a special achievement award.

Earlier, at the Air Force level, the **PATRIOT** also was selected the best newspaper in its class while it placed second in the AFRES contest.

Dyer's book placed first in the Air Force competition and SrA Michael Lyman was named photojournalist of the year.

Also in the AFRES contest, **WESTOVER: THE EYE OF THE STORM** placed first for special achievement, Lyman was named photojournalist of the year and MSgt. Thomas Allocco was recognized as journalist of the year.



# After more than 42 years, Chief Gosnell retires

By MSgt. Tom Allocco

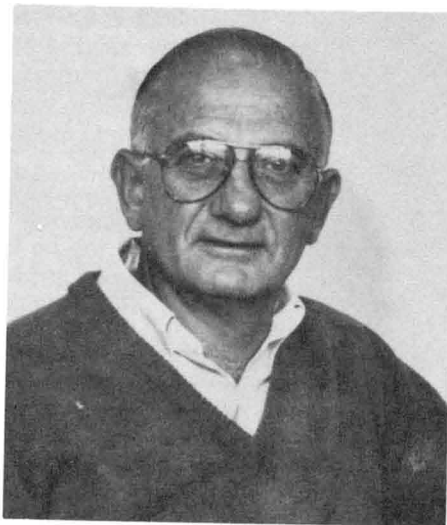
Before he finished his senior year in high school Raymond Gosnell was spending his evenings doing the equivalent of "mandays" at the Naval armory in downtown Rochester, N.Y.

When CMSgt. Gosnell retired in April he took with him memories of four decades of service with the Air Force, Navy, Marines and Army from Labrador to the Middle East. With the advent of high-year tenure limits, Gosnell's more than 42 years in uniform makes him truly among the last of an old breed.

Gosnell will conclude his career as medical services manager of the 23rd Aeromedical Patient Staging Squadron, one of the wing's geographically separated units which operates out of Griffiss AFB, Rome, N.Y. He has calculated that his last day will be exactly 42 years, 11 months and 17 days since he first raised his right hand and took the oath of enlistment.

He sat down with pencil and paper to figure the days because, he admits, "I'm emotional about leaving." To Gosnell, "it doesn't seem that long. I've enjoyed the whole time."

Gosnell was a 17-year-old high school student in 1950 when he joined the Navy Reserve and left home for boot camp at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. After completing Hospital Corpsman School at St. Alban's Hospital, Long Island, he returned home to serve with a Marine



Courtesy of Chief Gosnell

## CMSgt. Raymond Gosnell

Corps company in Rochester. After combat corpsman field training at the Marine Corps' Camp LeJeune, N.C., he returned to high school and earned his diploma while serving at the armory at night.

Gosnell left the Navy in 1961 and joined the Air Force Reserve's 9100 Rescue and Recovery Group. He later served as first sergeant of the 431st Medical Services Flight at Niagara Falls.

In 1968, he went to Fort Drum, a sprawling Army base on the edge of New York's Adirondack Mountains. Gosnell served as the first shirt of an air logistics squadron at Fort Drum where the Army trains for winter warfare under some of

the most rugged conditions in the continental U.S.

Gosnell served on the Army post for eight years before coming to Westover as nursing services superintendent and first sergeant of the 439th Tactical Hospital in 1976.

When the 23rd Medical Services Evacuation Squadron, forerunner of the 23rd APSS, was formed at Griffiss in 1982, he was named acting first sergeant.

He went on active during the first days of Desert Shield in August, 1990 and went with the squadron to Saudi Arabia the following January as medical services manager. The squadron set up a 150-bed medical staging facility at King Fahd International Airport, southwest of Dhahran. The squadron's accomplishments in Saudi Arabia are among his proudest memories.

"When we started we had a floor. We built everything from scratch and in four days we were on line to receive the first patients," he said. They treated more than 3,000 American and Allied patients.

After coming home on emergency leave, Gosnell helped conduct Westover's welcome home ceremonies for the Desert Storm troops.

Gosnell is employed in the Emergency Medical Services program of the New York State Health Department. He and his wife, Gail, have four sons, two daughters and five grandchildren. His son, SrA. Glen Gosnell, is a 439th CES firefighter.

## WWII Reflections: The Dam Busters

By SrA. Mike Lyman

In North Africa, the last battle is fought on the continent of Africa on May 5 and one week later, all Axis resistance in Africa ends.

In Western Europe, the RAF's Bomber Command launches a daring raid on the night of May 16 to destroy three important dams--the Mohne, the Eder and the Sorpe, in an effort to paralyze the Ruhr River's hydroelectric power.

To carry out the attack, a squadron of Lancaster bombers are modified to carry 9,000-pound 'bouncing bombs' which are designed to skip across the water to the dam before exploding.

Though the Dam Busters' raid is successful in breaching two of the three dams, the Ruhr River's hydroelectrical power is not knocked out for a significant

amount of time.

In Poland, the tragic month-long Jewish uprising in the Warsaw ghetto ends with all of the remaining Jews, some 56,000, being killed or resettled by the SS.

The Warsaw ghetto originated following the fall of Poland when the Germans herded nearly 500,000 Jews from throughout the country into the area as a first stage in Hitler's 'Final Solution.' The uprising was primarily in response to the nearly 300,000 Jews who had been deported from the ghetto and liquidated in the nearby gas chambers of Treblinka in late 1942.

In the North Atlantic, U-boat attacks on five convoys results in the loss of 20 U-boats. During the whole month, the Allies lose 165,000 tons of shipping for the loss of 40 U-boats.





## Patriot People

**Name:** Miguel Martinez, Jr.  
**Rank:** SSgt.  
**Age:** 31  
**Address:** Bridgeport, Conn.  
**Unit:** 439 AGS  
**Position:** Aircraft maintenance specialist  
**Civilian position:** Machine operator  
**Favorite food:** Spaghetti  
**Years of service:** 4  
**Favorite sport:** Football  
**Favorite hobby:** Running  
**Ideal vacation:** Deserted island  
**Best way to relax:** Sleep  
**Preferred entertainment:** Television  
**Favorite celebrity:** My wife  
**Favorite music:** Gospel  
**Favorite book:** Bible  
**Favorite color:** Black  
**Favorite car:** My Nissan  
**Pet peeve:** None  
**Best thing about Westover:** C-5s  
**Worst thing about Westover:** Food



TSgt. Sandi Michon

SSgt. Miguel Martinez Jr.



**AFTERMATH OF WAR --** Nearly two years after his parents were married, little Zachary Chyra was born. His parents, SSgts. Steven Chyra and the former Brenda Dupuis, were married two hours before reporting to mobilization for Desert Shield/Storm. The mobilization may have changed their wedding plans, but Zachary came right on schedule.

(Photo by SSgt. Vin Blanchard)

## Patriot Praises

### REENLISTMENTS:

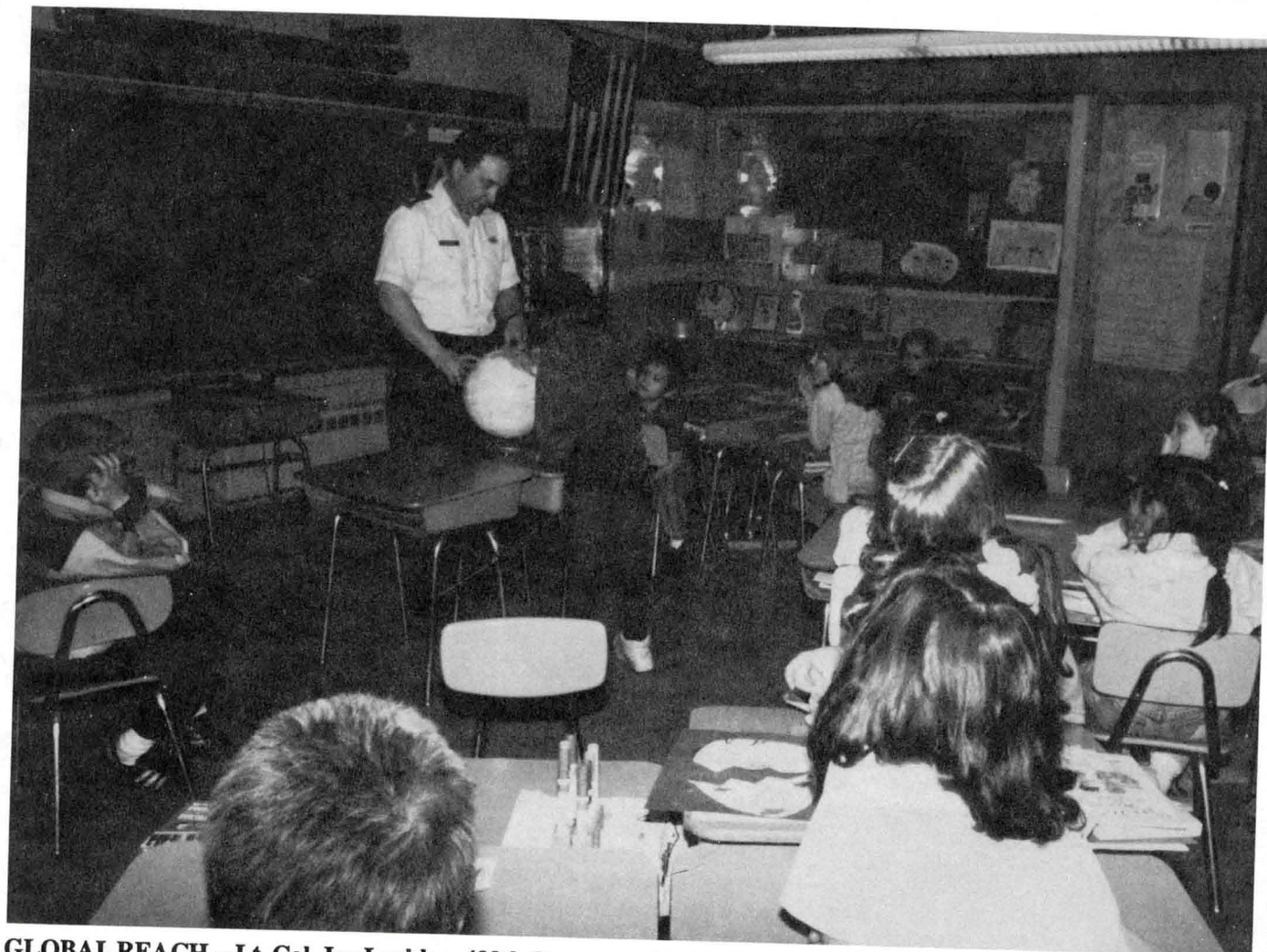
SMSgt. Dzwonkus, Thomas V.  
 SMSgt. Ferrara, Matthew M.  
 SMSgt. Tetreault, Paul P.  
 MSgt. Allard, Robert A.  
 MSgt. Hancock, Peter J.  
 MSgt. Harrison, Paul R.  
 MSgt. Kularski, Michael A.  
 MSgt. Lorange, Edward R.  
 MSgt. McKinney, James A.  
 MSgt. Szczepanek, Joseph  
 MSgt. Thoresen, Richard E.  
 TSgt. Angelastro, Michael C.  
 TSgt. Cessna, Thomas E.  
 TSgt. Colucci, Anthony C.  
 TSgt. Dube, Marilyn A.  
 TSgt. Gilcreast, Michael A.  
 TSgt. Hogan, Peter M.  
 TSgt. Holmes, Leslie C.  
 TSgt. McGee, Kirk A.  
 TSgt. Newton, Catherine A.  
 TSgt. Oliver, Richard J.  
 TSgt. Rehm, Stephen H.  
 TSgt. Rowanster, John F.  
 TSgt. Wentworth, Michael L.  
 SSgt. Begnoche, Wayne P.  
 SSgt. Boucher, Michael R.  
 SSgt. Boynton, Richard D.  
 SSgt. Cannon, Glenn G.  
 SSgt. Daigneault, Scott C.  
 SSgt. Dirienzo, Michael F.  
 SSgt. Dotson, Marvin  
 SSgt. Gates, Aaron D.

SSgt. Harder, Jason C.  
 SSgt. Hendricks, Teresa I.  
 SSgt. Huther, Russel F. Jr.  
 SSgt. Jones, Rosa D.  
 SSgt. Leamy, Gerard M.  
 SSgt. MacDonald, Glen A.  
 SSgt. Matherson, Gary M.  
 SSgt. Merrill, Stanley E.  
 SSgt. Myrdek, Renee A.  
 SSgt. Pitts, Melissa K.  
 SSgt. Simeone, Lavina L.  
 SSgt. Smith, Glenn R. Jr.  
 SSgt. Wampler, David A.

### ENLISTMENTS:

SSgt. Barklow, Richard H.  
 SSgt. Dukette, Lyn F.  
 SSgt. Hayford, Albert C. Jr.  
 SSgt. Lovelace, Denise L.  
 SSgt. Marino, Angelo M.  
 SrA. Godin, Richard J.  
 SrA. Leeds, Lawrence R.  
 SrA. Rivest, James W.  
 SrA. Simet, Manuel  
 A1C Bourk, Deborah L.  
 A1C Flynn, James M.  
 A1C Mullen, Brian D.  
 A1C Sklarski, Eric J.  
 A1C Stutz, Leslie J.  
 A1C Williams, Stephen R.  
 Amn. Heath, Marlene D.  
 AB Dupuis, Jennifer A.  
 AB Lamprey, Ellen T.  
 AB Murphy, Michael J. Jr.





TSgt. Sandi Michon

**GLOBAL REACH --** Lt. Col. Jay Lacklen, 439th Operations Group deputy commander, shows second graders the C-5's global mission as he explains a recent worldwide flight. Lacklen was at Fausey School in West

Springfield in March as part of the school's annual Community Read-to-Me Program, sponsored by the school's PTO. The students were fascinated by Lacklen's account of his visit to a Russian second grade a year ago.

# PATRIOT



Published monthly for Patriots like SMSgt. Stuart DeGray of Windsor, Conn., and 2,911 members of the 439th AW at Westover ARB, and geographically separated units.

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